

in tobacco production in 1967. Edgecombe ranked high in total production among North Carolina farm counties in that year. It ranked eleventh in grain and corn production, eighth in cotton production and sixth in peanut production.

Edgecombe held even or gained dramatically in almost all of the agricultural categories except cotton. Grain crops and soybeans led the production increase figures from 1960 to 1967. Corn production increased by 38 percent, wheat was up 48 percent, oats increased by a tremendous 92 percent and soybean production was up by 46 percent.<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that some of this increase in grain crop production was probably used for the feeding demands of local livestock but yearly increases in grain sales indicate that these crops are now big business.

Tobacco production dropped by 4.1 percent during the 1960 to 1967 period. This drop has probably been caused by growing restrictions on tobacco acreage allotments since yield per acre has continued to increase. Cotton production fell off sharply during the seven year period but still managed to rank eighth in the state. In 1960 cotton accounted for 12,000 acres of farm land but by 1967 this figure had dropped to just over 3,000 acres. The severe decline in cotton production indicates that the research and development of synthetic fibers has taken over cotton's once powerful position as the primary element in the clothing industry.

### Livestock Breeding

Livestock breeding has become a major factor in Edgecombe County's farming economy since 1960. This increase can be seen in the county's hog production which is much higher than North Carolina as a whole. Hog production increased by 36 percent from 1962 to 1968. Edgecombe's milk cow and heifer breeding followed the statewide pattern and fell off by 38 percent.

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<sup>1</sup> Unpublished Report, North Carolina State University, Agricultural Extension Service, March, 1969, Joe L. Perry, Agricultural Extension Agent.